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REMARKS OF  
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AT THE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

I am glad to be home, and I am particularly glad to be here for a university occasion. For this University gives meaning and focus to life in Ann Arbor -- even for those who are not privileged to be associated with it directly -- as the academic community serves to clarify the objectives and focus the energies of the Free World.

President Kennedy aptly described the function of the university when he said: "The pursuit of knowledge ... rests ... on the idea of a world based on diversity, self-determination, and freedom. And that is the kind of world to which we Americans, as a nation, are committed by the principles upon which the great Republic was founded. As men conduct the pursuit of knowledge, they create a world which freely unites national diversity and international partnership."

Commencement orators like to point to the fact that what we celebrate here is not an end, but a beginning. I prefer to take my text from another aspect of the occasion which we are observing today.

The ancient formula for the award of academic degrees admits you into a long-established community, whether it be the fellowship of educated men, or the ancient and honorable company of scholars, of which you are the newest members. This community embodies the highest ideals of the Free World. Its membership includes people of every race, color, and creed. They share a

common language, the language of ideas. They are dedicated to the fullest possible development of the individual human potential. And the only requirement for admission is a demonstrated capacity for and commitment to the use of one's powers of reason.

What I want to talk to you about here today are some of the concrete problems of maintaining a free community in the world today. I want to talk to you particularly about the problems of the community that binds together the United States and the countries of Western Europe.

Europe is the source of many of our traditions. One of these is the tradition of the university, which we can trace back to the groves of Academe, on the same site where only a few weeks ago the foreign ministers and ministers of defense of the European nations and the United States met to discuss their common problems.

I need scarcely remind you that Europe is one of the great sources of the American idea of freedom, and that it was the European philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who shaped the thinking of our own founding fathers. For all of us, Europe has been our teacher since we first learned to read.

One of the most impressive lessons that Europe has provided us recently is the lesson of her revival from the ashes of destruction at the end of the Second World War. The national economies of Europe were almost at standstill 15 years ago. Their capital plant was largely destroyed, either directly by bombing, or indirectly by years of neglect and patchwork repair. The people



were exhausted by six years of war, and a large part of the most productive age group had been wiped out. ~~But only~~ In the last 10 years, they have managed to increase the production of steel and electricity by over 130 per cent each, ~~and the production of automobiles by over 330 per cent.~~

The pump-priming help of the American Marshall Plan came at a crucial time in the process of European recovery. But the genius of the plan, as envisaged by men like Goerge Marshall and Harry Truman, was to help the Europeans help themselves.

At the same time that the nations of Europe were rebuilding at home, they were going through the difficult and often painful process of reestablishing their relationships with the peoples of Africa and Asia, no longer as master and servant, but as members of the human race, all equally entitled to develop their individual capabilities. This process of change is by no means complete, and there are still difficult times ahead. But the joint achievement of Europe and its former colonies in revising their relations with each other is at least as impressive as the economic recovery of Europe itself.

What may be the greatest post-war European achievement is still in the making. The nations of Europe have begun to level the outmoded barriers that confined their individual economies within national boundaries. As Jean Monnet, the principal architect of the new Europe puts it, "An entirely new situation has been created in the world, simply by adding six countries together. It's not an addition; in fact, it's a multiplication. You multiply the capabilities of the countries you unite. A dynamic process is beginning that is changing the

face of Europe and the role of Europeans in the world. "

The making of Europe has only begun, and indeed it is perhaps at its most critical stage. But we should not overlook the fact that French coal and German steel now move freely across the continent, and that German refrigerators and Italian shoes are sold without tariff in Belgian department stores.

All of these achievements have been accomplished under pressure from titanic forces which make a rational organization of human society increasingly difficult both for the Europeans and for ourselves. Let me mention some of these forces.

We are confronted with a population explosion resulting from our own success in coping with disease and abnormalities, and by now threatening to double the earth's population by the end of this century. Unless we can control this explosion in the poor and resource-limited countries, the effects of economic growth may be cancelled out by population growth, and ~~the~~ unsatisfied rising expectations, particularly in the younger nations, may upset the delicate balance of political stability.

We are borne along by the accelerating pace of science and technology. In this country alone, new inventions are patented at a rate of 50,000 a year. Our population of scientists and engineers has increased by more than 40 per cent in the last eight years. In fact, 80 per cent of all scientists and engineers who have lived throughout history are alive today.



We are faced with an extraordinary increase in the number of national states. Since World War II, 35 new nations have been formed. Each new nation expresses the natural desire for self-determination and self-government. But their numbers complicate the problem of international diplomacy at the same time that military and economic developments increase our inter-dependence. Every nation is more and more directly affected by the internal situation of its neighbors, and the globe has shrunk to the point where we are all each other's neighbors.

Lastly, we live in the shadow of the Sino-Soviet drive for world domination. It may be worthwhile to catalog briefly the component forces that make the Sino-Soviet power drive as strong as it is today.

First is the all-encompassing ideology of world communism which, at the same time, offers the idealist a concept of professed service to humanity, while it offers the cynic a theoretical justification as well as practical demonstrations of the most authoritarian methods.

Second, is the Machiavellian method developed to grasp and seize political power.

*Finally there*  
And last is the concrete fact of military power, and particularly of the increasing Soviet missile power, which constitutes a major threat to Western Europe and, to a lesser extent, to the United States.

In the face of all these challenges, the ultimate objective of the free world is to establish a system of world order, based on the dignity of the individual and dedicated to the free development of each man's

capacities. The members of the North Atlantic community -- the Europeans and ourselves -- bear a special responsibility to help achieve this objective. This responsibility derives from the strength of our internal institutions and the wealth of our material resources.

But we cannot hope to move toward our objectives unless we move from strength. Part of that strength must be military strength, enough to assure to the nations of the free world the freedom to choose their own course of development.

We do not agree with all the choices made by our friends around the world, but we defend their right to make their own choices, not dictated from Moscow or Peking. We believe that every human society has a natural tendency toward freedom, and that all free societies are naturally compatible.

The nature and extent of the military power base needed to meet the entire spectrum of challenges confronting the free world is beyond the capacity of any single nation to provide. Since our own security cannot be separated from the security of the rest of the free world, we necessarily rely on a series of alliances, the most important of which is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

NATO was born in 1949 out of the confrontation with the Soviet Union that ensued from the breakdown in relations between the former wartime allies. The Soviet Union had absorbed the states of eastern Europe into its own political framework, most dramatically with the Czechoslovakian coup of 1948. It had been fomenting insurrection in Greece, menacing Turkey, and encouraging



the Communist parties in Western Europe to seize power in the wake of postwar economic disorder. The sharpest threat to Europe came with the first Berlin Crisis when the Russians attempted to blockade the western sectors of the city. Our response to these evidences of aggression was immediate and positive. President Truman ordered an airlift for the isolated population of West Berlin which in time denied the Soviets their prize. The Marshall Plan, then in full swing, was assisting the economic recovery of the Western European nations. The Truman Doctrine had brought our weight to bear in Greece and Turkey to prevent the erosion of their independence.

But Western statesmen concluded that it would be necessary to secure the strength and growth of the North Atlantic community with a more permanent arrangement for its defense. The effective defense of Western Europe could not really be accomplished without a commitment of the United States to that defense for the long term. We made this commitment without hesitation. Arthur Vandenberg, one of the chief architects of NATO, expressed the rationale of the organization in the Senate debate preceding passage of the treaty, "NATO ~~is not built to stop a war after it starts -- although its potentialities in this regard are infinite. It is built to stop wars before they start. . . I . . . urge the Senate that this is the logical evolution of one of our greatest American idioms, 'united we stand, divided we fall. '~~"

The North Atlantic alliance is a unique alignment of governments. The provision for the common defense of the members has led to a remarkable degree of military collaboration and diplomatic consultation for a peacetime

coalition. The growth of the alliance organization has accelerated as the task of defending the treaty area has increased in scope, size and complexity. NATO has had its stresses and strains, but it has weathered them all.

Today, NATO is involved in a number of controversies, which must be resolved by achieving a consensus within the organization in order to preserve its strength and unity. The question has arisen whether Senator Vandenberg's assertion is as true today as it was when he made it 13 years ago. Three arguments have raised this question most sharply:

It has been argued that the very success of Western European economic development reduces Europe's need to rely on the U. S. to share in its defenses.

It has been argued that the increasing vulnerability of the U. S. to nuclear attack makes us less willing as a partner in the defense of Europe, and hence less effective in deterring such an attack.

It has been argued that nuclear capabilities are alone relevant in the face of the growing Soviet nuclear threat, and that independent national nuclear forces are sufficient to protect the nations of Europe.

I believe that all of these arguments are mistaken. I think it is worth-while to expose the U. S. views on these issues as we have presented them to our allies. In our view, the effect of the new factors in the situation, both economic and military, has been to increase the interdependence of national security interests on both sides of the



Atlantic, and to enhance the need for the closest coordination of our efforts.

A central military issue facing NATO today is the role of nuclear strategy.

Four facts seem to us to dominate consideration of that role. All of them point in the direction of increased integration to achieve our common defense. First, the Alliance has over-all nuclear superiority today over any forces confronting it. Second, this superiority not only minimizes the likelihood of major nuclear war, but makes possible a strategy designed to preserve the fabric of our societies if war should occur. Third, damage to the civil societies of the Alliance resulting from nuclear warfare could be very grave. Fourth, improved non-nuclear forces, well within Alliance resources, could enhance deterrence of any aggressive moves short of direct, all-out attack on Western Europe.

Let me point out how each of these facts has made common effort among the members of the Alliance more important and more urgent.

The United States nuclear weapons program is an all-out effort to provide for the nuclear protection of the Alliance. It has resulted in Alliance nuclear forces that are numerically larger than those of any potential enemy. They are more diversified, better deployed and protected, and on a higher state of alert. They are combat-ready and able to engage in flexible and decisive action. Moreover, the margin of

Allied nuclear superiority after a nuclear exchange, measured in surviving strategic nuclear forces, would be even greater than before. This margin would be increased <sup>even</sup> if the major enemy aggression leading to the exchange began with a surprise attack on United States strategic forces.

In fact, a surprise nuclear attack is simply not a rational act for any enemy. Nor would it be rational for an enemy to take the initiative in the use of nuclear weapons as an outgrowth of a limited engagement in Europe or elsewhere. I think we are entitled to conclude that either of these actions has been made highly unlikely. Yet irrational actions or miscalculations are not impossible.

It is the responsibility of a defensive military Alliance to frame strategy that will uphold national security interests in the event that actual hostilities occur. The capabilities I have described make such a strategy possible.

The U. S. has come to the conclusion that to the extent feasible basic military strategy in general nuclear war should be approached in much the same way that more conventional military operations have been regarded in the past. That is to say, our principal military objectives, in the event of a nuclear war stemming from a major attack on the Alliance, should be the destruction of the enemy's military forces, while attempting to preserve the fabric, as well as the integrity of allied society. <sup>contingency</sup> Specifically, <sup>likely</sup> a strategy which ~~targets~~ nuclear forces



The nature of Alliance nuclear forces makes it possible to retain major strategic strength, survivable, flexible and controlled, holding enemy cities in hostage while attacks confined to his military forces are in progress. A contrary strategy, which ~~must~~<sup>would</sup> target nuclear forces only against cities or a mixture of civil and military targets has serious limitations, both for the purpose of deterrence and for the conduct of general nuclear war.

In our best judgment, destroying enemy forces while preserving our own societies is -- within the limits inherent in the great power of nuclear weapons -- a not wholly unattainable military objective. Even if very substantial exchanges of nuclear weapons were to occur, the damage suffered by the belligerents would vary over wide ranges, depending upon the targets that are hit. If both sides were to confine their attacks to important military targets, damage, while high, would nevertheless be significantly lower than if urban-industrial areas were also attacked. The existence of civil defense also could have a significant impact on the number of deaths, especially if only military targets are attacked so that the principal danger to most civilians is from fallout.

In the light of these findings, the United States has developed its plans in order to permit a variety of strategic choices. We have also instituted a number of programs which will enable the Alliance to engage

in a controlled and flexible nuclear response in the event that deterrence should fail. Whether the Soviet Union will do likewise must remain uncertain. All we can say is that the Kremlin has very strong incentives -- in large part provided by the nuclear strength of the Alliance -- to adopt similar strategies and programs.



The strength that makes these contributions to deterrence and to the hope of deterring attack upon civil societies even in wartime does not come cheap. We are confident that our current programs are adequate to ensure continuing nuclear superiority for as far into the future as we can reasonably foresee. During the coming fiscal year, the United States plans to spend close to \$15 billion on its nuclear weapons to assure such superiority. For what it buys, there is no substitute.

In particular, relatively weak national nuclear forces with enemy cities as their targets are not likely to be adequate to perform even the function of deterrence. In a world of threats, crises, and possibly even accidents, such a posture appears more likely to deter its owner from standing firm under pressure than to inhibit a potential aggressor. If it is small, and perhaps vulnerable on the ground or in the air, or inaccurate, it enables a major antagonist to take a variety of measures to counter it. Indeed, if a major antagonist came to believe there was a substantial likelihood of it being used independently, this force would be inviting a pre-emptive first strike against it. In the event of war, the use of such a force against the cities of a major nuclear power would be tantamount to suicide, whereas its employment against significant military targets would have a negligible effect on the outcome of the conflict. In short, then, weak nuclear capabilities, operating independently, are expensive, prone to obsolescence, and lacking in credibility as a deterrent. Clearly, the United States nuclear contribution

to the Alliance is neither obsolete nor dispensable.

At the same time, the general war strategy I have described magnifies the importance of unity of planning, concentration of executive authority, and central direction. There must not be competing and conflicting strategies in the conduct of nuclear war. We are convinced that a general nuclear war target system is indivi<sup>s</sup>ible, and if nuclear war should occur, our best hope lies in conducting a centrally controlled campaign against all of the enemy's vital nuclear capabilities, while retaining reserve forces, also centrally controlled.

Enemy forces are located throughout the world and are targeted both on ourselves and on our allies. Our strategic retaliatory forces are prepared to destroy them wherever they are and whatever their targets. This mission is assigned not only in fulfillment of our treaty commitments but also because the character of nuclear war compels it. More specifically, the U. S. is as much concerned with that portion of Soviet nuclear striking power that can reach Western Europe as with that portion that also can reach the United States. In short, we have undertaken the nuclear defense of NATO on a global basis. This will continue to be our objective. In the execution of this mission, the weapons in the European theater are only one resource among many.